1: Ammar E, I-5 (1951) 1954
MR13 Fellahin MR13
Silwa

APPENDIX III

Average consumption is then:			*Price in £E*
One-half ardab of wheat per head	..	..	3
One-third ardab of barley per head	..	..	1
One-twelfth ardab of beans per head	..	..	1
Total	..	..	£E5

For the Summer Crop:

Two ardabs for husband
Two ardabs for wife (and chicken and sheep)
Half ardab for child

Average consumption one and five-sixths ardabs	..		6.50
Total expenditure on bread and beans	..	..	£E11.50

Expenditure on manufactured and prepared goods:

			£E
Clothes	..	..	4
Tea and sugar		..	3
Soap, kerosene, etc.		..	1
			£E19.50

The income or expenditure does not include items such as vegetables, e.g. onions and lentils, which are grown for home consumption. Yet two main items are not inserted: tobacco and meat. Meat purchases could be offset by the sale of chickens and eggs, but certainly the use of tobacco would raise the average consumption to £E20 at least.

It will be noticed that the expenditure on tea and sugar per head is proportionately large. Tea, with plenty of sugar in it, and no milk, is the fellah's main liquid intake, as he can drink tea at any time. It is almost one of the necessities of life in the village, and neither adults nor children seem to be able to do without it. Tea is taken at home and 'lubricates the mouths' in formal and informal gatherings outside dwellings and in guest houses. Two decades ago, Ali told me that food was the attraction of such gatherings, but now tea has become the fashion. It is a disgrace to omit to offer tea to a visitor. If while serving tea, or a meal for that matter, to a guest, another visitor arrives unexpectedly, the host is obliged to make another pot of tea for him, or at least insist orally on making it, perhaps later; otherwise, the latter would feel offended and consider that he was offered 'chance-tea' (sadaf), as such an offer is not considered hospitality.

Looking at the villager's budget of £E21 income and £E21 consumption, one can appreciate the precariousness of his financial solvency; and in case of misfortune his budget could be easily upset and cause him to fall into debt, an abhorrent state of affairs. One of the fellah's maxims is that 'debt is a worry at night and a humiliation during the day'.

2: Blackman E-5 (1920-1926) 1927
MR13 Fellahin MR13
Upper Egypt
Copts MR10

and warm exclamations of approval were heard on all sides as he proceeded. Finally he stood up on a high bench, and, one hand against his face and the other holding a rosary, worked himself up to an even greater pitch of fervour, gesticulating with the hand which held the beads. The audience too became more and more enthusiastic, and there were constant cries of "*Yā sheikh!*" ("O sheikh!"), "*Aiwa, keda!*" ("Yes, thus!"), as we might say, "Yes, go on!" One man at last got so beside himself with emotional fervour that he rose abruptly from his seat, tore off his turban, which he hurled at the sheikh, and then clasped him by the knees. Others too followed his example, flinging themselves in admiration on the sheikh.

When the recitations had gone on for some time there was a pause, and more coffee was handed round, and also more of my cigarettes. During this interval one of the sheikh's assistants went the round of the guests, to inquire of each whether he desired a *Fātiḥeh* to be repeated for himself, or for friends, the latter being mentioned by name. Each person presented the assistant with a small sum of money. Very many *Fātiḥehs* were said for me and for my family, while I made similar requests for several of my village friends. Then the recitations began again, and shortly after there was another pause as before. I am afraid to say how many boxes of cigarettes I distributed, but I do know that they were thoroughly appreciated.

This performance was continued till nearly midnight, when at last I rose to take leave of my friends. My departure broke up the assembly, and the rest of the guests quickly dispersed to their several homes. I was told afterward that it was one of the most successful *mawālid* that had ever been held; never had they had so many cigarettes to smoke, and never had the sheikh and his assistants received so much money! I regret to say that the child for whose benefit this *mūlid* was held died rather suddenly before I left Egypt.

Among the Copts the child receives its name at baptism, when the parents take it to the church. Total immersion is the recognized form of baptism among the Copts, and, according to Dr A. J. Butler,[1] the rite is permissible only in certain seasons of the year, and no child should be baptized during Lent, Holy Week, or at Eastertide. The same authority also states that a boy must be

[1] *The Ancient Coptic Churches of Egypt* (Oxford, 1884), vol. ii. p. 264.

2: Blackman E-5 (1920-1926) 1927
MR13 Fellahin MR13
Upper Egypt
COPTS MR10

similar erections on their backs, follow, bearing other female relatives and friends, many of the women uttering their *zaghārīṭ* as they proceed. I am told that a bride is thus conveyed on a camel if her husband lives in another village, but that she rides a horse if he lives in the same village as her parents. I have myself, however, never seen a bride on horseback.

Now that Ford cars are so common in Egypt even the *fellāḥīn* sometimes use them for conveying the bride and her friends to the bridegroom's house, the wedding procession thereby losing a great deal of its old picturesqueness. Cartloads of furniture are carried from the bride's house to that of the bridegroom, usually on the day before she goes there herself. Everything is left uncovered while it is being conveyed to the house, so that people may see what good furniture the bride is taking with her!

Music plays an important part in all the marriage festivities, and the bridal procession often includes a band. The groom gives a feast in his house to all his male friends, the bride remaining in a room at the top of the house with her female relatives and companions. The women dance a peculiar dance on these occasions, usually known to Europeans as the *danse à ventre*. It is exceedingly ugly, and must require a special development of abdominal muscles. A woman or girl who performs in this way first ties a sash tightly round her waist, then, holding out a stick in front of her in both hands, she jerks her stomach up and down, turning round and round as she does so. As I have said before,[1] the bride's friends present her with small sums of money, placing these gifts on her upturned face. As evening advances guns are fired, the women utter their *zaghārīṭ*, and the musicians likewise contribute to the general din. An awning is usually erected outside the house, and here the men congregate, congratulating the bridegroom and drinking coffee and smoking. The festivities are usually kept up for two or three days unless the people are very poor.

Among the Copts the preliminary arrangements are much the same as among the Muslims, but with them there is, of course, a marriage service in the church. Among the *fellāḥīn* the bride is brought to church on a camel if she and her bridegroom live in different villages, but on a horse if their homes are in the same village. The bride is followed by her female friends similarly mounted. I am told that the service takes place in the evening,

[1] See p. 87.

273 as it is forbidden by his religion; he is in any case too poor to pay for it, and his head could not stand it.

272 Coffee was introduced into Egypt at the end of the fifteenth century by the Sufis of Yemen. The fellah drinks very little of it, far less than the people of Cairo(*). However, when he goes to the market he may sip a small cup or two while playing backgammon with his friends.

Since the war of 1914-18, exaggerated tea-drinking, after a fashion introduced from Tripoli, has taken the place of coffee-drinking, and has become the rule not only where menfolk meet together, but also in the home. Fellah families are accustomed to drink tea several times a day, and in considerable quantity. Not only the adults, but the smallest of the children, too, feel a need for tea. The fellah takes his teapot with him to the field. The poorest spend at least 30 piastres a month on tea and sugar. When they have not enough money to buy any, they lie flat on the ground, incapable of activity. "In one village", says Mgr Khousam, Bishop of Thebes, "I asked what had happened to the animals, which constitute the fellah's capital. There are none, they answered me. They have been sold to buy tea. Tea has become as much a necessity as bread."

By boiling the tea till it turns black, a thick, syrupy liquid is obtained, rich in tannin and alkaloids, which sooner or later ruins the stomach and the nerves, weakens the whole body, and debases the character. But it is comforting and brings forgetfulness.

[439 651] This black tea has become the drug of the fellah. Imports have tripled in a few years. The Government has also raised the duty to three times its original figure, from two and a half piastres to seven, and then to eight and a half piastres a kilogramme, to put it out of the fellah's reach. But the evil has not diminished, for those who have acquired the habit will do without food and starve their families rather than give it up. On the contrary the increased tax has only hastened the ruin of the fellah and of his health.

Merchants mix tea-leaves scavenged from hotels, cafés, and ships, with sawdust, bean husks, and dry *molokhiya* or poplar leaves. This mixture, coloured and baked, they sell to the wretched fellaheen, when they cannot get tea by smuggling.

Paradoxical as it may seem, there appears to be a relation between the increase in this "drug habit" and the development of perennial irrigation. It has in fact been proved that this invention, which has doubled Egypt's wealth, has also encouraged bilharzia and ankylostomiasis. These diseases weaken the fellah and reduce his power to work. He seeks relief in the stimulant readiest to hand. As the men, who spend their lives in mud and water, are more affected by these diseases than the women, they are also more addicted to this "black tea" (46).

The cultivation of tobacco, which was brought into Egypt at the beginning of the seventeenth century, was forbidden by a decree of 25th June, 1890. Imported in the raw state from Greece, Turkey and Japan, and processed in Egypt, it is too dear for most of the fellaheen. As with coffee, it is in much greater use in the towns (47).

As a rule the fellaheen eat three meals a day; at sunrise before leaving for work (*futûr*); about 10 o'clock, in the field (*ghâda*); and at home at dusk (*'asha*). The fellaheen always sit cross-legged on the ground, and eat with their fingers.

Those at work usually eat their lunch (*ghâda*) in the open air and in company, each taking his food from the plate or enamel pot his wife has brought him, while the water bottle passes from hand to hand.

The chief meal is supper, which consists of warm cooked food eaten with the family. Cooking is done with oil over a Primus stove, or in a household oven fed with strawed cow-dung (*gilla*).

The fellaheen do not go in for cattle-rearing, and as meat is expensive they cannot eat much of it. They have mutton or beef at most once a week, and at least on the two great festivals, or when an animal is killed by accident. This means an orgy, at which everyone puts away tremendous helpings of food. Every now and again some rich man, for a vow or a funeral, kills an ox or *gamoossa* and gives away its meat; then the poorest can have a feast for nothing.

Those who live on the banks of the Nile, a large canal, or a lake, use nets to catch small fish, which they cook in oil. But most of them are limited to vegetables. Onions (*bassal*), turnips (*lift*), green peppers (*filfil*) and cucumbers (*khiyâr*) are eaten raw. Vegetables which they cook are ladies' fingers (*bâmia*) and *molokhiya* (Jew's mallow) (48), both of

113

39. *T.*—This is not quite true. Fellaheen are frequently to be seen in the Nile and in the canals, swimming and splashing about for pleasure after a hot day's work. [515 526]

40. *T.*—In 1943 the cheaper cotton stuffs were selling at a controlled price of P.T. 6 a metre, and a tailor would ask at least 15 piastres for the work. [463 435]

41. *T.*—At Akhmîm and Nagada in Upper Egypt a considerable weaving-industry still flourishes. The latter has a considerable trade with the Sudan. [288]

42. Dr. Theodore Bilharz (d. 1862) was a German lecturer at the Cairo School of Medicine. In 1858 he solved the mystery of this endemic disease by discovering the parasite that causes it, and thus made attack upon it possible. [744]

43. Department of Public Health : REPORTS AND NOTES ON ANKYLOSTOMIASIS AND BILHARZIASIS IN EGYPT: Government Press, Cairo, 1924,

This work contains a complete bibliography on the two diseases, with an account of their ravages in various villages of Egypt, and of the Government's attempts to fight them.

44. Ibnet ish-Shaty' : EL-RIF EL MASRI (THE EGYPTIAN COUNTRYSIDE), p. 125.

45. In 1935 Egypt imported 7,888 tons of coffee beans from Java, Santos and Yemen. [439]

46. See the ANNUAL REPORT for 1938 of the Central Bureau of Information on Narcotics. However, in a technical essay in the REVUE DES QUESTIONS SOCIALES (July 1940, pp. 94-106) entitled IS BLACK TEA HARMFUL TO THE HEALTH AND WORK OF THE PEASANTRY ? the author (who remains anonymous) feels justified in giving a negative answer. [272]

47. The famous Egyptian cigarettes are all made of imported tobacco. The intention was to avoid the danger of hasheesh as well as to gratify the Turkish Government. (The smoking of very cheap cigarettes has now become extremely common among the fellaheen. - *T*, 1945.) [276]

48. BAMIA and MOLOKHIA are two mucilaginous plants. The former, known in British colonies as OKRA, is 241 262

8:Schaefer A-5 (1900-1901) 1904
MR13 Fellahin MR13
Upper Egypt

Another Contrast.

539×
574
554

104. (The Well-to-do.)

Win gani abu ṭarbūš,
la'ul-lo: ya marḥábe!
we-afriš-lo is-serīr
wa'allī-lo-l-martabe
wazemzem-lo-l-fingal
wa'ul-lo: itfaḍḍal gabe!

If someone with a ṭarbūsh comes to me,
I will say to him: "Welcome!"
And make the bed ready for him,
And make the mattress high,
And offer him the (coffee-) cup, [272]
And say to him: "Please thee, without payment!"

1. The ṭarbūsh is the head-covering of officials and well-to-do citizens (see No. 24). [292]

9: Klunzinger D-5 (1863-1875) 1878
MR13 Fellahin MR13
Upper Egypt

CHAPTER III.

WORKING DAYS AND HOLIDAYS. DAYS OF JUBILEE AND DAYS OF MOURNING.

WORKING-DAY LIFE OF THE COMMON PEOPLE.

In Upper Egypt the life of the ordinary inhabitant of the towns is passed in a simple and uniform manner. Before sunrise he leaves his couch, performs the morning ablutions enjoined by his religion, and repeats his early prayer. To say his morning prayer after sunrise is forbidden by the ordinances of his religion, and to allow the sun to rise above one's slumbering head is universally regarded as prejudicial to health. He then drinks his cup of coffee and smokes his pipe, either at home or in the public coffee-house. His breakfast, which he takes after his coffee (though sometimes before it), consists of the remains of his meal of the previous evening, or of cakes and milk, or for a trifle he procures from the market the ever ready national dish of *ful*, that is, stewed beans. He then engages in his vocations, buys, sells, writes, works, or moves about, all in the most comfortable, quiet, and deliberate manner. "What is not done to-day may be to-morrow"—in good Arabic, *bokra in shah Allah* (to-morrow if God please)—stands written on his forehead in large letters. The most urgent affairs leave always a quarter of an hour free in which to gossip with acquaintances over coffee and a pipe, be it in retail-shop, workshop, or office. And if many acquaintances turn up the more numerous grow these quarters-of-an-hour. Now and again he has no work, or no desire to do it, and then he drags himself from one friend to the other. Bread for himself and his family will no doubt turn up; *robinna kerim*—"the Lord is gracious (or liberal);" it is but little he requires, and in case of necessity his soft-hearted neighbour will not allow him to go supperless to bed. Even before the mid-day call of the muezzin from the minaret, he

[p. 158]

[pp. 1-157 not processed]

9: Klunzinger D-5 (1863-1875) 1878
MR13 Fellahin MR13
Upper Egypt

a shallow tub, and by pouring warm water over the body and scrubbing it with soap and date bast. In the public baths certain hours or days are set apart for the fair sex, and here many women spend half days bathing, adorning themselves, smoking, and gossiping. At these times no male, not even a eunuch would dare to set foot in the apartments. 515 [368]

In other respects also the women are by no means robbed of social pleasures. They visit each other often enough, if possible early in the morning, and are wont to remain half a day, a whole day, or even several days, though both parties may be in the same town. They smoke, drink coffee (the latter being less in use among the women than among the men—the opposite to what holds good among the Franks), gossip, show their ornaments and finery, tell stories and wonderful tales, sew, embroider (but do not knit), sing and dance, or better, make some one sing and dance before them (since a well-conducted lady ought neither to be seen nor heard, and therefore should not sing), laugh and make merry —in short the harem so greatly pitied elsewhere enjoy life, but on the sole condition, that no man be present! They are less often allowed to take a walk in the open air; some—and this is considered a great virtue—never leave the house after their marriage. Their lady friends come to visit them instead, and as almost every house in these regions has its court-yard or a terrace, women are by no means kept out of the open air. Moslim women are generally excused from the burdensome prayers of the men, and pious or even hypocritical women are in the Moslim female world a great rarity; indeed they scarcely know the most important doctrines of their religion. Piety in them is even looked upon with dislike. 574 562 517 [376] [377] [533] [535] [351] 562 [182] [171]

At mid-day the husband always eats alone, or with his boys or guests. Immediately afterwards, however, the wife again comes into honour since her lord likes to enjoy his siesta in the chambers of the harem. After sunset no respectable woman must show herself outside the house, even though veiled and attended, and now, or some hours later, the husband 512 [264] [513] [562]

9: Klunzinger D-5 (1863-1875) 1878
MR13 Fellahin MR13
Upper Egypt

than the Friday's ceremony. This day's breakfast[1] the first for a month, consists, if possible, of fresh or salted fish, with all kinds of fruits and delicacies, in order that the body may be gradually accustomed to its usual course of life. People appear in their holiday clothes, and the shops are shut. On this day shirts covered with a year's dirt are exchanged for brand-new garments even among the poorest, gay silken stuffs infold those parts and members of the body that were previously exposed, costly cloths flutter round the head, and the cheerful colours of the bright red, bright yellow, green, and blue coats show vividly in the morning sun. The little girls, who are allowed to run about the streets and markets only on rare occasions, on this day flutter about like brilliant butterflies through the whole town, in their fire-red clothes, their faces carefully painted and touched up, and their persons hung with ornaments of gold and silver. A nameless joy beams in and from out the heart of everybody. No longer is there any enemy, any hateful unbeliever; high and low are all one, the whole citizens embrace each other—liberty, equality, fraternity. A round of visits is made from house to house; officials and people of the higher ranks give a very imposing reception, and everybody wishes everybody else a happy new year, though the new year will not come for three months yet. After the visitor has embraced his host round the neck, bending over his right and his left shoulder, coffee, and sherbet are brought, or the half-fermented native beer made from barley, and called *buza*. Everybody serving another in any capacity on this day receives from his master a money present or at least a new garment. The women also adorn themselves and hold receptions for each other, but this is done to a greater extent on the following day, as they have too much to do on the first day in preparing liquors for the male guests. Any other kind of work is out of the question. The remaining portion of such holidays passes quietly, the chief times of the day being proclaimed by the reports of a cannon as well as by the muezzin. As early, however, as the second day of the feast some persons who are eager after business open their shops and buy and sell;

[1] [i.e., following the fast of Ramadan—Analyst]

9: Klunzinger D-5 (1863-1875) 1878
MR13 Fellahin MR13
Upper Egypt

or mausoleum of the sheikh, as the saint is called, booths and tents are erected, and the spot where he is buried is crowded with devout visitors. At night the halls of the mausoleum are lighted up, all the lamps above the tomb being lighted; the citizens crowd to the spot, listen to the reading of the Koran, and give themselves up to the intoxication of the *zikr*, a kind of religious dance which will be described afterwards. Coffee and sherbet are served out in the booths, and dancing-girls, singers, and instrumental performers attract the people, the stalls of the dealers in fruits and confectionery extend far into the city; all the shopkeepers have provided large supplies of goods; foreign traders expose their commodities; the festival assumes the appearance of a fair. The nearer the feast the greater the throng of people that assembles from far and near. Every hour brings more new-comers, many of whom advance in solemn procession, horsemen and flags in front, with drums, musical instruments, and women behind, who express in a melancholy chant their longing regards towards the sainted sheikh, or utter quavers of joy. The flags and the sheep that are dragged along in the procession are intended as offerings for the saint, in fulfilment of a vow made for a prayer granted in the course of the year. When the attendants of the sheikh, as sacrificial priests, have taken as much as they want, the remainder is divided among the struggling people.

At the place where the festival is held boys and youths amuse themselves on a large swing, the smaller and the girls enjoy a kind of see-saw; on the level unused area of the graveyard the equestrian performers go through their manœuvres. Clad in a wide flowing blouse, with the sleeves thrown far back, their feet planted on the broad flat stirrups, as they sit in their saddles that rise into a high pommel before and behind, holding upright in their hands a long pole, these performers ride at full speed, one after the other, from one row of people to the opposite. They display their dexterity by suddenly stopping their flying horses when close beside the frightened crowd, in accomplishing which their pole serves as a support, and by raising the dust in clouds causes their daring to be visible to a distance.